

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PEKING 01191 130940Z

ACTION EA-09

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, ELTH, CH

SUBJ: OBSERVATIONS ALONG TIENTSIN-SHANGHAI RAILWAY

1. SUMMARY. USLO OFFICER TRAVELING FROM SHANGHAI TO PEURNG JUNE 9 OBSERVED THAT DOUBLE TRACKING ALONG THE TIENTSIN-SHANGHAI LINE HAS NOT BEEN COMPLETED. THE SECOND TRACK IS NOT READY FOR SERVICE FROM NEAR LIANG WANG CHUANG (5328/3769/8369) SOME 25 KMS SOUTH OF TIENTSIN TO AT LEAST TECHOW (1795/1558) IN ORTHERN SHANTUNG PROVINCE. MANY STATIONS ALONG THE LINE ARE ADDING SIDINGS AND, IN SOME CASES, BUILDING WHAT APPEAR TO BE NEW OR EXPANDED MARSHALLING YARDS. LARGE INVENTORIES OF RAILS, CONCRETE AND WOODEN TIES AND BALLAST WERE OBSERVED ALL ALONG THE LINE. DURING MORE THAN 30 HOURS OF TRAVEL NO DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES WERE

SEEN PULLING FREIGHT TRAINS. END SUMMARY

2. ALTHOUGH TWO TRACKS EXIST FOR THE TIENTSIN-SHANGHAI RAILWAY, ONE OF THESE IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 PEKING 01191 130940Z

STILL NOT SERVICABLE FROM A POINT STARTING SOME 25 KMS SOUTH OF TIENTSIN AND EXTENDING AT LEAST AS FAR SOUTH AS TECHOW IN NORTHERN SHANTUNG PROVINCE. A USLO OFFICER MAKING A SHANGHAI-PEKING TRIP ON JUNE 9 OBSERVED THAT IN SOME PLACES IN SOUTHERN HOPEI THE SECOND TRACK WAS STILL WITHOUT

BALLAST OR THE BALLAST WAS STILL BEING LEVELED BY WORK CREWS. IN SOME PLACES SMALL WORK VEHICLES WERE IDLE ON THE SECOND TRACK. IN ONE PLACE NEAR TSANGCHOW (3318/1558), IN SOUTHEAST HOPEI THE SECOND TRACK ENDED BEFORE A SMALL UNCOMPLETED BRIDGE AND BEGAN AGAIN ON THE OTHER SIDE. FOR SEVERAL LONG STRETCHES ABOVE CAN ZHOU THE SECOND TRACK LOOKED SERVICEABLE THE THE APPEARANCE OF THE TRAILS (STILL RUSTED AT THE TOP) SUGGESTS THAT IT IS NOT IN USE.

3. SOME REPLACEMENT OF TIES OR TRACKS WAS OBSERVED ON THE WESTERN TRACK JUST SOUTH OF SUCHOW/HSUCHOW IN KIANGSU PROVINCE, RENDERING THIS TRACK INOPERATIVE. FOR MOST OF THE TECHOW-LIANG WANG/CHUANG ROUTE THE WESTERN TRACK IS THE ONE IN CURRENT USE. BUT FOR SOME STRETCHES THE EASTERN LINE IS USED.

4. RAILWAY TRACK IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION IS EVIDENT FROM TIENTSIN SOUTH TO BEYOND HSUCHOW IN KIANGSU PROVINCE. EXPANSION OF SIDINGS AND FURTHER ENLARGEMENT OF YARDS WAS PARTICULARLY MARKED IN TSANGCHOW (HOPEI) AND TSINAN (SHANGTUNG), BUT NEARLY EVERY SIZEABLE STATION SEEMED TO HAVE SOME WORK UNDERWAY. AT TSANGCHOW STATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 PEKING 01191 130940Z

SIX TO SEVEN NEW TRACKS HAD BEEN LAID DOWN BUT STILL REQUIRED BALLAST. AT THE SAME STATION AN ENORMOUS STOCK OF CONCRETE TIES STACKED SOME FIFTEEN FEET HIGH FOR ABOUT 200 YARDS WAS OBSERVED. AT THESE AND MANY OTHER STATIONS, NEW LOADING PLATFORMS WERE UNDER CONSTRUCTION, PROBABLY TO MEET ADDED NEEDS WHEN THE DOUBLE TRACK ACTUALLY COMES INTO USE.

5. USLO OFFICER OBSERVED THAT ONLY STEAM LOCOMOTIVES WERE USED TO PULL FREIGHT TRAINS. DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES WERE SEEN ONLY PULLING PASSENGER TRAINS AND WERE CONSPICUOUS BY THEIR ABSENCE AT STATIONS AND MARSHALLING YARDS.

6. COMMENT: NCNA ANNOUNCED ON JULY 23, 1976, THAT THE SECOND TRACK OF THE TIENTSIN-SHANGHAI RAILWAY WAS COMPLETED AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

AND OPENED TO TRAFFIC. THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS
APPARENTLY WISHFUL THINKING. SOME OBSERVERS
NOTED THEN THAT SOME 18 YEARS HAD BEEN
REQUIRED TO CONSTRUCT THE SECOND TRACK ON

THE 1,300 KM RAIL LINE WHILE ONLY SIX YEARS

WERE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE 1,860 KM
TAN-ZAN RAILWAY. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THIS
LINE WAS NOT ASSIGNED AS HIGH A PRIORITY AS
PREVIOUSLY IMAGINED BECAUSE THE SINGLE LINE'S
CAPACITY WAS UNDER UTILIZED. THE SCALE OF
BUILDING ACTIVITY WITNESSED NOT ONLY ON TRACING
BUT ON SIDINGS, YARDS AND PLATFORMS SUGGESTS
THAT ADDITIONAL CAPACITY IS GREATLY NEEDED NOW
AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ARE BEING ALLOCATED TO
ENLARGE THE LINE'S OVERALL CAPACITY.
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PAGE 04 PEKING 01191 130940Z

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